



The Treaty of Fort Laramie in 1868 closed much of northeastern Wyoming to settlers. As a result, the UP, which in the same year was the first railroad to enter Wyoming, was reluctant to build a line north from Cheyenne. The defeat of the Sioux in the Great Sioux War of 1876-77 re-opened the region and was quickly populated by ranchers and settlers. Throughout the 1870's and 1880's, businessmen and politicians in Wyoming petitioned the UP to build a line to support the growing region. In 1886, the Wyoming Central Railway, a subsidiary of the Fremont, Elkhorn & Missouri Valley Railroad, entered eastern Wyoming north of the Southwest map area and commenced shipping cattle east through Nebraska instead of Cheyenne. Due to fears that the lingering dislike for UP would prevent the passage of a bond at support a UP line north from Cheyenne, the UP created the Cheyenne & Northern Railway in 1886 to build a line from Cheyenne into northern Wyoming and ultimately to the Northern Pacific line in Montana. In 1887, the line was completed 125 miles to Wendover, Wyoming, on the North Platte River, where construction ceased. UP took over the line in the same year (1887) and extended the line about 25 miles to Orin Junction (just north of map area) to connect to the Wyoming Central line.

Northward view of the C&N line (now BNSF) at Dwyer, where the line crosses rolling grasslands transitional from western mountains to eastern plains.



Southward view of the C&N line (now BNSF) at same location as previous photo.